

RED WEEKLY

23 September 1976

No. 166

Price 10p

EQUAL PAY for TRICO WOMEN!

Demonstrate—

Saturday 2 October, assemble 2.00 p.m.
Boston Manor Park, Boston Manor Road,
Brentford (under M4 flyover)

Called by Working Women's Charter Campaign

LABOUR-ARM AFRICAN WORKERS!

WHILE HENRY KISSINGER was busy 'shuttling' across Southern Africa in a desperate effort to find 'the last chance of a negotiated solution', the struggle of the black people continues to spread. Huge strike waves have swept the black townships of South Africa, while in Zimbabwe [Rhodesia] the armed struggle has pushed ahead.

Kissinger's sudden interest in the well-being of the African people stems not from any feeling for the blacks. He is frightened for the interests of American imperialism in southern Africa following the victory of the guerilla fighters in Angola and Mozambique.

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For Kissinger and Callaghan, 'majority rule in two years' appears the best way to block the black freedom fight. Vorster too fears the spread of the armed struggle to South Africa, and like Kissinger is prepared to ditch the Smith regime.

Despite Callaghan's fine words condemning the racists in southern Africa, he turns a blind eye to the continuing flow of arms and investment. NATO still supplies Vorster with arms, while British firms such as Rolls Royce sells licences and patents to the apartheid regime.

Nor are they alone. There are 360 American and 500 British firms with investment in South Africa. It is with them that the concern of Kissinger and Callaghan lies.

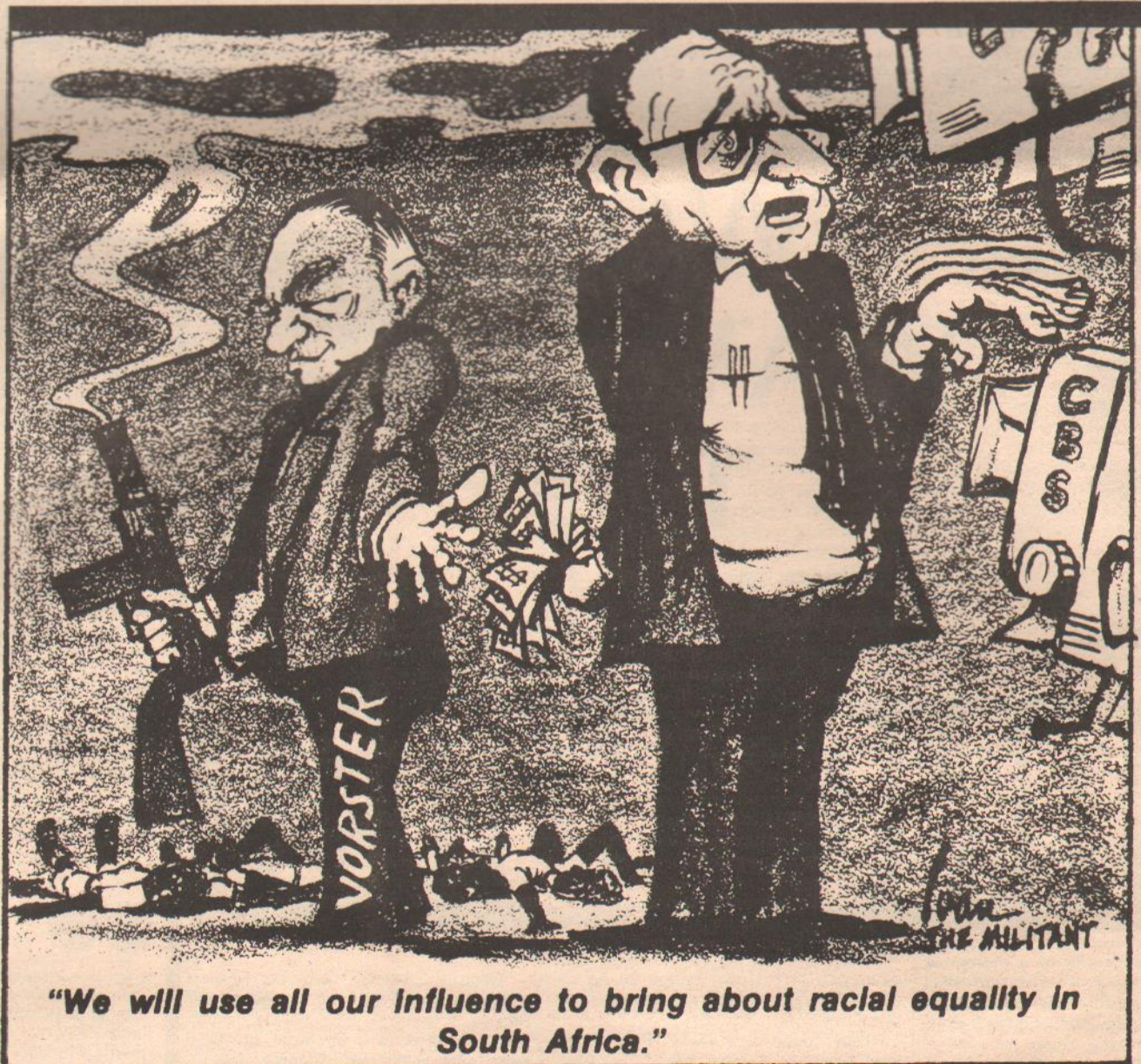
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The hypocrisy of the Labour Government sunk to yet greater depths this week. British Petroleum, in which the Government has a 68 per cent stake, announced that it is planning to invest a further £250 million in South Africa.

At a time when the apartheid state's economy is in deep crisis, BP's chairman in South Africa went out of his way to assert their faith in the country's stability — 'and we are laying down hard cash to prove it'

the price of uranium from Namibia. The price for Britain is 13 dollars a pound, while the world market price is 22.50 dollars. It is not surprising that the price is cheap — the subsistence wages paid by British firms such as Rio Tinto Zinc average less than £20 per month.

In the last two weeks both the TUC Congress and the Labour Party International Committee have called for a ban on new investment in South Africa. Now they must be forced to follow the lead of the Australian unions, who banned all air and sea trade with South Africa during July.

Such a move would greatly strengthen the hand of the black resistance to apartheid and cut across the manoeuvres of Kissinger and Callaghan in Zimbabwe. The Labour Government shouldn't be 'negotiating' with the racists, it should be arming the freedom fighters.



"We will use all our influence to bring about racial equality in South Africa."

NOT WHITE RACISTS!



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

As a heterosexual (fairly), male (mainly), International Socialist (completely), I don't know if I am 'leading' enough to qualify for Red Weekly's Great Right to Work March Controversy. But as a supporter of the IS Gay Group, the Right to Work Campaign and of unity on the revolutionary left, I would like to suggest that the IMG's efforts on the Brighton march have harmed all three.

Like many other Right to Work Campaign supporters who have been soldiering on to the open hostility of the trade union leadership and the sneers of the rest of the revolutionary left, I was heartened when Red Weekly announced its support for the Brighton march. Better late than never, we thought, without realising that the operation was designed not to swell the march but to attack and 'expose' IS.

It's a pretty devastating comment on the state of the IMG that your field of intervention is no longer the real world, not even the familiar fields of the Labour Party ward, but has shrunk to simply entering other organisations' marches. But it becomes politically tragic when you quite cynically makes use of the issue of the IS Gay Group to manipulate — rather unsuccessfully it transpires — the Right to Work march to Brighton.

I don't think it's any great secret that there have over the years been quite big differences in emphasis within IS on the gay issue (the current Gay Left gives a resume by an ex-IS member), although this year's IS Conference after a long debate has taken up a new, and in my view, stronger position. But to try and stir up a dispute between the IS Gay Group and the Secretary of the Right to Work Campaign demonstrates not a concern for homosexuals in revolutionary organisations but the reverse, a cynical use of them, yet again, as political footballs.

I don't see eye-to-eye with the Right to Work Secretary over the general question of the gay and women's banners because I think the Right to Work Campaign needs to make a special point of involving people who have so far been often repelled and ignored by the official movement. But I most certainly respect John Deason's views on how to organise a march — he does after all stand to spend several years in jail after the Staples Corner attack.

Coordinated and tight organisation is essential, at least on the middle stages of the march, and the march has the right to make its own rules about banners and march order in the light of this. It's not a picnic to Aldermaston. I would certainly respect Red Weekly's views on the matter more if you managed to muster as much indignation about the 43 arrested marchers who face the courts as you do about the food, the tents, the discussions and everything you can find to gripe about on the road to Brighton.

For finally it is this immense patronage which is most unpleasant about Red Weekly's reporting. For some reason you seem to assume that simply by being members of the IMG you automatically have a more sophisticated grasp of trade unionism, internationalism and sexual politics. Members of IS apparently suffer from some sort of brain defect from which only the laborious verbiage which Red Weekly churns out in the name of polemics can rescue us.

In my experience IS members understand only too well the politics of the IMG and reject them. And I would prefer the vigour of some of the 'unsophisticated' young marchers, whose defiance brought heart to the unemployed all over England, to the weary pedants of your editorial page — DAVID WIDGERY (Islington).

Far from 'using' it, this is the first time we have been made aware of 'the issue of the IS Gay Group'. We merely reported John Deason's refusal of a request by the All London Gay Workers to carry their banner on the march [19 August] and subsequently commented on this and the actual decision on the march to exclude gay banners. — EDITORS.

Further letters on the issues raised by the Right to Work March are welcomed by the editors. Please keep them as brief as possible.

The IS and the RTW March

RED WEEKLY IS PLEASED TO PRINT THREE MORE LETTERS ON THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE RECENT RIGHT TO WORK MARCH TO THE BRIGHTON TUC.

I feel I must correct an error in your otherwise incisively accurate report of the London-Brighton Right to Work march. Also, some further comments on the march and the lessons we can draw from it. In the article it was alleged that Jimmy McCallum, the Socialist Worker candidate for Walsall North, mildly assaulted a Bristol comrade by 'grabbing and twisting his finger'. I was the 'victim' of this, and while it was acknowledged that no injury

resulted from the incident, I feel that an allegation of physical violence inside the workers movement is a serious matter. I would therefore like to set the record straight. After the Saturday night march delegate meeting, in which I was the only person of about 30 who spoke against IS's conception of 'military organisation' of the march, Jimmy McCallum approached and started haranguing me for daring to voice ideas he

could not agree with — and during the ensuing heated argument, he grabbed hold of my finger. While his attitude might easily have been described as patronising, arrogant and thoroughly sectarian, no violence whatsoever took place. A more significant and serious episode took place later in the march, after the article was written, which dramatically underlined the points it made. After expressly forbidding meetings of

'political fractions' on the march, and preventing the 'Woman's Right to Work' contingent from holding a meeting, the IS held their own 'Socialist Worker Supporters' meeting, excluding not only the IMG but even an IS comrade who voted in favour of women's and gay banners being allowed on the march. At this meeting the leading organisers of the march spoke — the same people who had earlier prohibited such meetings from taking place. After the meeting, IS registration forms were handed out like confetti to the audience.

This was the most garish example of the sectarian lunacy shown by the leaders of IS all through the campaign, and serious IS militants should think seriously about the implications of this.

Over the past 18 months, substantial sections of IS's more experienced members have been replaced mainly by raw and inexperienced militants such as the young workers recruited on the march. The IS pay virtually no attention to politically educating these recruits, indeed the march indicated that the IS are stricken with horror at the very idea.

This means that there is a small and decreasing number of 'middle cadre' who mediate between the base and the leadership, and so the leadership inevitably become increasingly paranoid at the 'threat' to their base posed by other left groups. This reduces any serious political attitude to other left groups to a string of violent denunciations.

And so the IS is at present racked by a powerful dynamic towards sectarianism and bureaucraticism. This also explains why the IS feels obliged to organise stunts like the Right to Work march, whose useful potential is negated by IS's morbid fear of uniting with forces they have political disagreements with. This is the fundamental reason for the solitary trade union banner on the march, this is why they want 'military control', and this is fully in the traditions of corrupt social democracy and Stalinism, and not principled revolutionary Marxism — JOHN SMITH (Bristol).

That's Capitalism

TWO WAYS TO STRIP



SLATER: Not in Denmark



ESTHER RANCID: Finds the report on Slater Walker 'quite as obnoxious as do most of her readers'.

OBNOXIOUS!

Karen Jenkinson works as a cashier in Tesco's supermarket at Northfield, Birmingham. Last month a customer accused her of shortchanging. The company's store-detective immediately stepped in. Karen was ordered off the shop floor and into the offices. She was promptly strip-searched.

A different treatment was afforded to Jim Slater, who made his fortune through another kind of stripping. In the take-over boom of the late Sixties he bought up firms cheap, sold off the unprofitable parts, and made a killing on the rest. For this 'asset stripping' he was praised as a financial genius by the press — though he was probably called something else by the workers who got the sack.

Slater was the spirit of buccaneering capitalism in the dismal world of the British economy. When late last year it looked as if his paper money empire might collapse altogether, the Bank of England stepped in with a secret loan of £70 million — the same Bank of England that withdrew support from the pound as soon as the seamen demanded a few more crumbs.

and strip-searched. Instead it took a team of accountants nearly a year to dig up part of the truth about the operations of Slater Walker.

They found that Slater Walker may have breached Section 54 of the 1948 Companies Act by providing financial assistance for the purchase of its own shares. But the Director of Public Prosecutions is unlikely to take any action.

They also found that personal loans amounting to £1.2 million had been made to Slater and former chairman Tony Buckley. In fact Buckley was advanced £500,000 after it was decided that he was leaving the group. The amazing reason for this decision was to enable him to buy shares in a company he planned to develop in order to improve the security of an earlier loan!

Slater broke the most elementary rules of business practice bar one — to get rich quick. The result was that last September Slater Walker was holding onto £75m of property which was producing an income of £1.5m — less than the interest on loans with which they were financed. For its liabilities of £57m due inside three

exist. Open the books? Only the workers could do that. Take over the banks and finance houses? You're talking revolution! So there will be more Lowsons, more Lonrhos and more Slaters.

Acting Chairman Sir James Goldsmith, who took over from Slater in October of last year, has said that there's not much chance of recovering loans from two of the directors who are in financial difficulties. He said there would be no use in driving them into the ground. Capitalism cares — for its own.

Meanwhile 17-year-old Karen Jenkinson returned to work in Birmingham last week after a two week apology holiday at management's expense. The store detective was there as well. So 50 members of the shop workers' union USDAW walked out. That is the only protection they have.

Jim Slater also has protection. 'Tiny' Rowland, cowboy boss of Lonrho, declared: 'I don't like to see a man like Jim go under He will get a second chance with us helping him. I believe he'll get to the top again. That's capitalism. 'Obnoxious', I'd call

I am not a leading member of the International Socialists or the Right to Work Campaign though I am a member of IS and (dare I say it) I also support the Right to Work Campaign. For a left-wing group who are always attacking sectarianism, I must say that in the past few weeks I have read so much sectarian back biting by the IMG against IS as to make my blood run cold. As you will see I live in Darlington. We in Darlington tend to support all IMG meetings and they support us. But I wonder if our IMG friends would support us quite so consistently if Socialist Worker found so little else of interest to print that they spent a few weeks just vilifying the IMG? You can bet we'd have lost their support long ago. Yet it is IS who are classed as sectarian.

The article on the Right to Work March is just another chance for the IMG to 'have a go' about IS. You seem to have purposely miseducated your readers on a good many points. However to me the most important one is on banners.

The Jarrow marchers had women marching separately and at the back of the march with their own banners. The IMG, it seems, wanted the same of the Right to Work march. Why? Have we got leprosy? Or don't you think that women have the same

separate banner or contingent? The idea of the Right to Work banners is because we are all members of one class, the working class, and as such we all march under one banner. United we stand and all that. As a housewife I was really delighted at the decision that women should march as comrades with us all under the Right to Work banners. Of course, trade union banners were allowed to show that employed (at work) people supported those of us fighting for the Right to Work.

As to your other points, well I am sure you will get plenty of replies to the article on those. Besides which, to be frank I am so heartily sickened by the IS-bashing indulged in by the IMG that I'm beginning to wonder why I bother even to buy Red Weekly any more. I know we have our differences, but a deliberate policy to antagonise seems ridiculous in the extreme, especially when local branches of IS and IMG can work so well together.

It seems a little bit like sour grapes on the part of IMG, and it seems a pity they just can't accept that the Right to Work thing was a success and will continue to be so and help us working class to build a bigger stronger movement instead of



Seamen lobby NUS headquarters for strike action

HULL MILITANTS SUPPORT SEAMEN

One of the reasons advanced by National Union of Seamen's leader Jim Slater for postponing the strike was that he 'feared' lack of solidarity from other workers. The truth is that solidarity does exist for the seamen's cause. Hull is an example of this.

A call for a meeting to set up a broad based solidarity committee was initiated by Red Weekly supporter Keith Russell, chairman of the Botanic Ward Labour Party. The response was quick. Transport and General Workers Union shop steward Stan Suddaby, and Charlie Hodgkins, chairman of the 1960 and 1966 seamen's strike committees, were the first well-known figures in the Hull labour movement to support the initiative.

Keith Russell also spoke to the Hull Ports Shop Stewards Committee, who gave the lie to a slanderous article in the Sun which quoted an anonymous Hull docker as saying that the seamen would get no support from the Hull docks. The dockers' reply was to agree to co-sponsor the meeting and send along two delegates for the platform. Building worker Stan Suddaby will also be on the platform.

Stan has a long history of solidarity with the seamen. In both the 1960 and 1966 seamen's strikes the Hull seamen asked Stan, then a railwayman, to help them organise effective strike action. Along with Charlie Hodgkins, Stan was the victim of a vicious national press witch-hunt. These were the 'tightly knit group of politically motivated

How was solidarity action organised in 1966?

Because the NUS bureaucracy was forced to make the strike official, the CP played an important role in organising solidarity meetings throughout Yorkshire. The dockers and the miners in particular responded to the call for financial assistance.

I went on a speaking tour round the mining areas and we raised over £10,000. In Hull the support was rock solid, not only from the seamen but from the dockers and the railwaymen as well.

What was the response of the media to the solidarity given to the seamen by rank-and-file workers?

You've got to understand that the only tactic left to Wilson and Woodcock when confronted with the mass solidarity of the working class was the old 'red smear' campaign. After Wilson's speech a whole series of articles appeared in the local and national press slandering the strikers — attempting to drive a wedge between the men and their leaders. The then Minister of Labour, Ray Gunter, leaked the names of leading militants to the press to stoke up the press witch-hunt.

Last Saturday, Hilary Wainwright, one of the best known militants in the Newcastle and Tyne area, was involved in a serious car crash. For a time, Hilary was in the critically injured ward of the Newcastle General Hospital. But now she is improving, and



Stan Suddaby speaking at 1966 meeting

men'. The Daily Telegraph in August 1960 paid Stan a superb tribute to his life of working class militancy by describing him as 'a disinterested expert who was willing to run strikes anywhere for anybody'.

Although he was for many years secretary of the Hull branch of the Communist Party, Stan is now an open critic of the CP's subordination of independent working class initiatives to the bureaucracy; and in practice over the years — such as in the bitter and prolonged Jean Jepson dispute in Hull — Stan has fought against the manoeuvres and sell-outs of the CP. Noel Hibbert of Hull IMG asked him about the seamen's struggle in 1966 and today.

What is your view of the role of the Labour Government and the TUC, remembering not only 1966 but what's happening today?

Just as in 1966, the Labour Government's main job is to hold down the living standards of working class people, so as to bail out the bosses' system. The policies of Callaghan and Murray are paving the way for a Tory victory and leading the country in the direction of a Corporatist State. The Labour Government are softening up the labour movement so that the Tories can really put the boot in.

In your time you've been a seaman as well — what are the conditions and problems of seamen?

Well, everybody knows or should know about conditions of pay, lack of benefits, the question of captive time, etc. But what you probably don't know is that seamen under the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 can't strike on the job like other workers. In 1960 and 1966 seamen were jailed for striking on ship. You might remember the Patrick Neary case — there were mass pickets and demonstrations for his release.

You wouldn't believe this but under this Act in so-called times of 'emergency' British seamen, if they're in foreign ports, can be 'press-ganged' into the Royal Navy!

What do you think of the role of the NUS leadership?

Well, as you know, after the mass meeting on Monday in Hull all the blokes were very bitter, saying they'd been sold down the river yet again. I think Slater took a hard position for strike action — but that's purely a personal opinion.

way the union is run the lads can't do anything about the full-time officials who voted against strike action.

No matter what happens, the proposed solidarity meeting will take place on Wednesday 29 September at 7.30 p.m. in the Stevedore and Dockers Club, Posterngate, Hull.

Red Weekly asked TOMMY FORD, a Gardiff seaman, what he thought of the NUS Executive's response to the seamen's threats:

'I expected it. I expected them to postpone action. We're being browbeaten. They could have taken independent action. The seamen would have been behind them. We should demand now that if we don't get our claim we go out on strike. We should ask the international unions to support us to the hilt. It should be a fight to the finish.

'The social contract hasn't just worked against the seamen. It's against the workers as a whole, definitely. Prices are going up all the time, wages aren't.

'As for the shipping industry, the best thing that could happen would be if the whole industry was nationalised.

'One last thing. About this £80 a week we're supposed to be getting. My basic is £39.52 a week, and I've gone up to five months without overtime.'

A JOURNALIST will shortly be required for the Red Weekly editorial staff. Women are particularly invited

IN FOCUS

The Politics of Elections

'EVERYBODY DESERVES a place under God's sun', declared Cyril Smith at the Liberal Party Conference last week. He was making this generous concession to black people. But he could have been speaking about the Liberal Party itself.

David Steel, the new leader of the Liberals finished their conference with a rousing call for the politics of coalition. The speech was an innovation for the Liberals, but not an unexpected one.

The election results of February 1974 saw the lowest proportion of votes for the Labour Party since 1931. The Tories' proportion was the lowest of this century. The crisis of the two major parties was reflected in the growth of both the Liberal and nationalist votes. After the tumultuous struggles of the working class against the Tories, Labour was not able to offer a programme or a lead for the middle classes in society or rouse the enthusiasm of the working class.

This failure has been banged home after nearly two and a half years of policies which would have been forced back down the throat of a Tory Government. The trade union leaders rail against racism and the growth of the far right. They know that the growth of such movements will seal their own fate as well as the organisations that they lead. But none of them will lead mass action against the policies which have stimulated the rise of the National Front to the situation where they will be fielding at least 300 candidates in the General Election — making them the largest fascist movement in north-west Europe.

Vast upheaval

All the economic and social conditions are present for a vast upheaval in British society. But such an upheaval could be very dangerous for the working class. Led into passivity by its leadership, no alternative programme or leadership has developed or even begun to develop against the betrayals of the Labour Government.

It is true that a feeling of deep hostility exists amongst the rank and file of the trade unions. But the Communist Party has done everything in its power to hold it back, for fear of finally rupturing its relations with the 'left'.

It is true that, haltingly, a movement of opposition is developing against the Callaghan-Healey leadership in the Labour Party. But it has been blocked by the unprincipled support given to their policies by the left both in the Cabinet and in Parliament. They choose not to launch any fight until the Labour Government meets a defeat at the hands of the Tories. They duck the critical question of what to do when Labour is in power.

Because of these dangers, it is not sufficient for revolutionary Marxists to confine themselves to the work of building a left wing based on the policies of class struggle rather than collaboration, through exclusive concentration on the trade unions and Labour Party. The fight for alternative leaders and policies must take advantage of all opportunities to put forward a programme which is directly counterposed to those of mass unemployment, cuts and incomes policy. That includes bourgeois elections.

Far left

The candidature of the far left in Walsall and Stechford will do precisely that. That is why Red Weekly will support the candidature of the International Socialists in Walsall and fight to gain the widest support and best platform for all those fighting the cuts, unemployment and racism — although we do not anticipate such an approach from the IS. In Stechford, the IMG will try to call a meeting of all those who think that a class struggle intervention in the by-election is necessary, to thrash out who is the best candidate to express that fight. At the same time they will put forward Tariq Ali as an IMG candidate. We think that this fight for workers democracy has to be at the centre of the electoral fight.

We also ask those militants in the Labour Party who are genuinely interested in fighting the attacks of the Labour Government to support meetings where Labour and other workers candidates can confront each other on the way forward for the whole class in front of the widest possible audiences.

We think that it is unlikely that the Liberals will find 'their place in the sun' next to the Tories in the next Government. But such speculation is not the main question today. The main question is starting mass action here and now, using every possible weapon against the policies of this Government.

Bernard's blind eye

BERNARD LEVIN, Britain's most famous expert in whatever he should choose to comment on, chose last Tuesday to devote not inconsiderable space in *The Times* to the hotly debated question of postal balloting for union officials in the engineers' AUEW.

Of course Levin does not bother to mention the unions where officials are elected for life, or appointed, or indeed where elections themselves are a rarity. For instance he does not seem concerned that Jack Jones has been elected for life (until retirement at 65) as

General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and appoints all other TGWU officials.

Levin's concern with trade union democracy only goes as far as his concern that the full-time officials in the AUEW and other unions should be right-wing moderates. To that end the device of postal balloting is very useful to the ruling class.

By forcing union members to vote in isolation in their homes, where they are much more susceptible to the ever increasing red-baiting in the press, the hand of the right wing is strengthened. Particularly in a situation where the Broad Left has failed to

the *Sunday Mirror*.

By falling for the bait set by the right and calling for an end to 'outside interference', the Broad Left simply sets itself up for further accusations of being undemocratic. The real problem with union elections is not that the press and organisations like True-mid slander left-wing candidates. The real problem is the lack of union organisation in elections — the limited circulation of election addresses, the lack of rights for tendencies to campaign openly for candidates, the confining of discussion to poorly attended branch meetings.

Only a fight for genuine workers democracy in the unions can banish the influence of the Levins and Wyatts. It means fighting for:

- * the free circulation of all election addresses;
- * the right of tendencies to campaign openly for candidates, whether of the left or right;
- * voting to take place in factory ballots after mass meetings have been held to discuss the platform of the contending candidates;
- * the right of recall by the membership of

WRONG TO STAND AGAINST LABOUR?

As a member of the Labour Party, I have been much concerned by recent announcements that the International Marxist Group intends to support a Socialist Worker candidate in the Walsall North by-election, and is considering standing a candidate of its own in Birmingham Stechford.

In my opinion, such a move would be a mistake. The supporting of revolutionary candidates contains a confusion of approach to the leadership of the Labour Party. A correct application of the united front strategy towards the reformist leadership of the class requires a thoroughgoing fight against that leadership within the mass organisations.

At the present time of widespread defeats for the working class there is

disenchantment within the Labour constituencies with the Callaghan leadership. It is the duty of revolutionaries to be in the forefront of those waging the fight.

Of course, there is no guarantee that such a fight would be successful in the short term in Walsall or Stechford — almost certainly it would not. But to abandon such a struggle without a fight and establish your own revolutionary candidate smacks of an unserious attitude towards the fight for leadership, and a desire to fight only on your own 'pure' programme. It hardly needs to be pointed out that the effect of a prolonged and serious fight against the local leadership of the Labour Party — as in Newham North-East, Hammersmith North, etc. — prod-

uces a far greater political impact and clarity among the working class than any number of revolutionary candidates. It is this lesson that the IMG needs to absorb from its 1974 election campaign.

When the working class begins to recover from this period of defeat — a point we have not yet reached — the first recipients of a new upsurge of support will be, as always, the left reformists. The task of the day will be to insert a revolutionary programme into the fight for maximum class unity. The pre-condition for such an intervention will be patient work in the trade unions and Labour Party. It will be a tragedy if many revolutionaries remain outside of this work, vainly trying to organise imagined groups of workers who have allegedly broken from reformism (where, comrades, where?).

The fight for programme does not involve the necessity of always being able to fight directly on your own programme. What should determine our tactics is the best means of putting our politics across to the working class while maintaining the right to independent political positions. Clearly work in the Labour Party does not hamper this latter perspective.

Moralism and the desire to abstain from any taint of collaboration with the reformists should be — but unfortunately is not — entirely foreign to revolutionary Marxists. It was for this reason that Red Weekly — making a dubious division between Benn and Foot — refused to support the latter in the leadership fight earlier this year. The criterion for support was not the class collaborationist policies of Benn and Foot, but the opportunity which a victory for either against the right wing would have provided for increasing our programmatic intervention and demands on the Labour leadership and thus of fighting for our politics in the class as a whole. — GRAHAM DURHAM [Leeds].

See 'In Focus', page 3.

Industrial Relations - Thomas Lowe Style

Just over two months ago a group of active trade unionists arrived and started working for the Thomas Lowe building firm on a central Birmingham site, Spring Road. Their first discovery was that many of the working rules that apply to the building industry were being ignored, particularly in the fields of safety and welfare.

When the site had been fully unionised and a shop steward had been elected, the management were approached about safety conditions and bonus rates. Although the workers were promised an immediate improvement in safety conditions and a vast increase in bonus rates, the firm later informed the shop steward that they would attempt to improve safety but they could not possibly afford an increase in pay. Incidentally, Lowe's were paying only 30 per cent of the average bonus payments in Birmingham.

To combat this the workers held a meeting and decided to operate a 'go slow'. A factory inspector was summoned to the site and the scaffolding was condemned. Meanwhile, the local regional office of the building workers' union UCATT was attempting to establish a Joint Conciliation Panel to create some sort of ruling on bonus rates.

For three days the workers held the upper hand, picking at every feature of the Working Rules that had been ignored by the firm. The management's next step was

to produce a letter from the City Architect informing the firm that the specifications of the mortar were in doubt and that all work on this particular site must be immediately suspended. The workforce, which consisted of one bricklaying gang (seven men), were dispersed. The shop steward was sent to Stoke-on-Trent (50 miles from his home) and the others to sites in the Birmingham area. Meanwhile the Spring Road site lay idle.

Two weeks later, four of these workers were sacked on another site in Birmingham on the grounds that the company could not provide them with any work. Three days later a company of sub-contractors (D&S Joinery Ltd.) started building on the Spring Road site. The reason why all this was possible was that in January the Leader of the then Labour Council passed a resolution allowing the use of registered sub-contractors on council projects. His name: Clive Wilkinson, himself a member of UCATT, a right-wing Labour councillor and believed to have ambitions to succeed Roy Jenkins in the Stechford parliamentary seat.

Now, at the end of weeks of picketing and attempting to rally support around Birmingham, these workers have been defeated — partly because of the strength of the opposition in delivering materials in their own lorries, partly because the Regional Executive Committee of UCATT has failed to give any positive support in this struggle, but most importantly because there has been tremendous erosion in the organisational ability of the shop stewards movement within the building and construction industry as a result of the employers' notorious 'black list' and the increasing use of sub-contract workers to smash the organisation of militant trade unions on the sites.

It is urgent for all trade unionists to fight to smash the 'lump' system of employment in the building industry and establish a system of direct employment for all trades. — PETE McGEER [UCATT, Birmingham].



A FLOOD OF IDEAS

Jonathan Silberman's article on the drought (Red Weekly, 9 September) made some useful points, some a little simplistic.

The weather does not remain constant due, amongst other things, to changes in the earth's orbit round the sun. Under capitalism, it appears, no flexibility exists to cope with these changes in the environment. In the long run only an economy planned for human need, not profit, will allow us to live in a rich, complex and therefore ultimately stable state of dynamic equilibrium with the plants, animals, air, soil and water of the planet. The 'drought' shows that capitalism is incapable of doing this.

What can we fight for now?


1. If water supply is a crucial problem, so is effluent treatment and pollution control, i.e. what happens to the water once it's been used. As the North West Water Authority (NWWA) pointed out in its First Annual Report, there is a great under-investment in public sewers, sewerage treatment, and disposal plant going back over many years.

Much of the sewerage in Manchester and Merseyside was built between 1830 and 1850. They can't be maintained easily, and failure and collapse are on the increase. Since 1939 little has been done to replace old installations, and the call for new sewers resulting from increased demand is not being met.


2. The fact that water management is so capital intensive means that investment is a crucial problem. The NWWA inherited a debt of £330 million from its predecessors in 1973, and has spent 40 per cent of its budget on debts and interest payments. These charges clearly reduced the capital available for investment — combined with the withdrawal of central government funds when the support grant to authorities undertaking water management was withdrawn, this has resulted in severe under-investment in capital projects. All this happened before the present Labour Government demanded cuts, such as the now shelved £26 million plan to clean up the River Mersey.

Daily Mail, Friday, September 10, 1976

"If we want to save jobs, we have to save water."



Are you using less water at work as well as at home? If not, you could be putting your own job in danger — and those of others too. Aim at cutting your own use of water by half from today — and help your firm to do the same. After all, it's not just water you're saving. It's jobs.



SAVE WATER
National Water Council

LEN MURRAY - Tries to persuade people that by saving water they can save jobs. If this is true, he must leave the taps on every night!

crucial demand is therefore the cancellation of the debt and interest repayments and the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses to finance the massive programme of needed public works.

3. Of course, like many 'nationalised' industries, the holding-down of prices — water and sewerage charges — below the actual cost of production is used to subsidise the big consumers, the large firms, by providing cheap water to help boost their profits. For example, in 1974-5 the NWWA's non-capital spending was £90.6 million and its receipts were £88.4 million.

In conclusion, I doubt if comrade Silberman's proposed use of water from

much increased use.

Tree loss is becoming a real problem. The inability to control the ravages of Dutch Elm disease, millions of trees dead or dying, and the destruction of hedges and trees in the East of England to make bigger fields, are likely soon to reduce the stability and productivity of the soil. Tampering with ecological systems to create 'efficient' capitalist farming may well result in severe droughts, higher winds, 'dust bowl' like conditions and even a net drop in agricultural productivity.

I doubt if the cuts in social spending are going to result in the planting of trees and

Portugal: Labour support group formed

As Red Weekly readers will know, the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class [SCPWC] held its founding conference earlier this year. It is a broadly-based group having support from CLPs, trades councils, LPYS branches, socialist and student organisations, and trade union branches, which has the aim of building active solidarity with the Portuguese workers in their struggle for socialism.

The Labour leadership's record on Portugal — especially when in government — is very bad. Through NATO and EFTA it supported the Salazar and Caetano regimes. After the 25 April coup, it took part in international imperialist economic pressure on Portugal; it helped to sponsor and support the right-wing leadership of the Portuguese Socialist Party, even when Soares was providing a cover for a pogrom against the left.

To counter this, the SCPWC decided, at its founding conference, to conduct a campaign against these policies of the

Labour Government. To this end, a Labour Party support group — with representatives from supporting Labour Party organisations — has been established. Its first major activity will be a meeting at Blackpool at the time of the Labour Party Conference.

Tom Litterick MP will be speaking along with Alvaro Miranda, of the Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee [who has just returned from Portugal], and the film 'On the Side of the People' will be shown. The meeting will be held at the Kings Arms, Albert Road, on Wednesday 29 September, commencing at 7.15. We would urge all Labour Party members to publicise this meeting.

The support group can provide speakers for Labour Party organisations and will be organising a school on Portugal in London in November. For information, requests for speakers etc., write to: Mark Douglas, [North Hackney CLP], 103 Osbaldeston Road, London N16 6NP [tel. 01-806 7179]. — PETER PETERSON (for support group).

Blowing the GAF

There's an old, old story about how they stop workers from reading books in case they get ideas. Well, delegates to the Birmingham District Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions last week found out that it's true.

When a member of the Technical and Supervisory Staff (TASS) section of the AUEW was elected shop steward at GAF, a company which makes equipment for factory offices, a private detective agency was called in to investigate his 'political' background. The grounds for GAF's suspicion was the shop steward's Irish origins.

The private detective agency reported, the shop steward was called in by GAF management — and sacked. He was told that his employment had been terminated

Carlos? Had he in fact been toting an A-bomb around the factory in a plastic hold-all?

No, 'fraid not. The sacked steward was taking an Adult Education course at night school on 'Sociology and Political Science'. GAF management had obviously heard what they say about sociology students — let alone one with an Irish background.

Birmingham District CSEU will be notifying all affiliated engineering unions of the case. It's a salutary lesson on how far employers are prepared to go to oust activists — and on the 'impartiality' of Industrial Tribunals — LINDA SIMON (delegate to Birmingham CSEU).

RED WEEKLY

A Special Review of the Labour Conference

'SHOULD I HAVE HUNG UP?', asked Bob Cryer MP in last week's Tribune. He is the latest left to join the ranks of the Government. Red Weekly's reply is a loud 'YES'. Not merely are we against further recruits from the left adding their support to the anti-working class policies of the Callaghan Government; those who remain, such as Tony Benn, should resign forthwith.

We have no confidence that such a course will be followed by the likes of Benn, Booth and Co. All of them show a sudden enthusiasm for the routine tasks of their office rather than face up to questions of principle such as voting against the cuts.

Arguments that the right wing in the Cabinet would be glad to see the back of them are a joke. Callaghan and Healey are pleased to have the left tag along — on their terms.

Contract

But Cryer doesn't want to use such sophisticated left covers. He maintains that the Labour Government has gone a long way to fulfilling its manifesto commitment — the only cloud on the horizon is the high level of unemployment. He might have added the cuts and the fall in the standard of living (although he didn't). But he is correct.

At the core of the last Labour election Manifesto was the development of the social contract. It is now in full bloom. All those who chattered that the social contract meant a new bargain between the Government and the trade unions have been proved right — a bargain struck at the expense of the working class, with 1.5 million unemployed, £1,000 million cuts and a 6 per cent drop in living standards as the price.

That is why those who try to nail the Government on its non-implementation of the Manifesto will lose hands down. It is not possible to fight from a platform with a rotten core.

Diversion

Once again the 'judicious use of import controls' will be wheeled out into the debate at the Labour Party conference as a diversion from the record of the Government. Such solutions are right in line with the philosophy of the social contract. They pretend that there is a solution which can protect bosses and workers, this time in a 'fortress Britain'.

There is no such common interest. Those like Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon who pretend that there is merely seek to conceal the essence of the social contract — that the working class should bear the expense of the economic crisis.

The fig-leaf of import controls seeks to hide the fact that after the collapse of the 'traditional left' in the trade unions, the left MP's have given up the fight against the leadership of Callaghan and Healey. Of course there are motions to this Conference which express an alternative to the collaboration of the Labour Government — a class struggle alternative. But those few that call for mass action against the Government's policies are marked for defeat.

Resolutions

Nor is the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy adequate to prevent these resolutions — even if they are passed — from gathering dust in the files of Smith Square. The procedures on selection of parliamentary candidates start to pose the basic question about Labour MP's and the Labour Government — whether they are responsible to the working class or to Parliament. But a pressure campaign against the right wing will only result in the use of the bureaucratic methods against which the campaign protests to crush their objections. The first weapon in the arsenal that has been used is the three year rule. There are others.

The real problem that this movement



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

The Challenge Facing Labour

lefts. It is not enough to demand that the lefts fight, although this is an essential starting point. The real nettle that has to be grasped is that even if the lefts do fight, such caucuses must be organised on a national level within the party, to counter the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

It is in this process that an alternative leadership can start to emerge from the rank and file of the party — a class struggle left wing, not a 'left wing' based on the politics of collaboration with the betrayals of the Labour Government.

Serious

Much more serious questions are at stake in this conference than the evaluation of the extent to which the Government has kept to its programme. As the results of the recent by-elections show, massive abstentions by Labour voters as well as gains from the Labour base to the organisations of the far right are the consequence of the attacks which this Government has made on the working class.

Already in Scotland the emergence of the Scottish Labour Party has come through the passivity and corruption of Labour in Scotland. It is stupid to deny that the SLP, through its rejection of the cuts, unemployment and incomes policy has taken a step to the left of the Labour Party.

The SLP will be standing candidates in the next General Election. **Red Weekly** will support them, while calling for the return of the Labour Government, because unlike even the leftest of the lefts on the NEC this party is committed to voting against the central aspects of the Government's anti-working class programme.

The by-elections in Walsall and Stechford will also be marked by the appearance of far

Party, but because we think that what has to be emphasised today is the necessity for a fight back based on **mass action** against the policies of cuts, unemployment and incomes policy.

We will fight for all workers candidates to present their programme before meetings and assemblies of trade unionists, Labour Parties, black organisations and other workers organisations.

Programme

The sort of programme to fight for in such meetings will aim to tackle the central aspects of the Government's attacks:

★ **Restore all cuts.** For a programme of useful public works to meet social needs and employ the jobless.

★ **Against the incomes policy.** Automatic compensation for inflation in wages, state benefits and social expenditure as a whole. Base it on a cost of living index drawn up by the working class.

The standing of independent candidates in Walsall and Stechford against the Labour Party will in no way contribute to a Labour defeat. If those huge majorities are lost it will be as a result of the record of the Labour Government. The same argument is used against a fight-back by the lefts in the Labour Party. They have accepted that a fight which defeated the Government would be their responsibility, not the Government's. So they have tagged along, however grudgingly.

The only responsibility that the lefts will have for the introduction of the most right wing Tory Government since the Second World War is that they didn't fight to stop

Tameside - a sharp lesson

The Tory Party have had their thunder stolen by the Labour Government this year. They did score one significant victory however - the defeat of comprehensive education in Tameside.

The Tory Council's efforts to reverse the existing plans to eliminate educational privilege were met with immediate action from the local labour movement. NALGO and NUPE members threatened strike action. The teaching unions voted to take no part in selection procedures for the grammar schools. The Trades Council pledged itself to back all actions against the Tory schemes.

But the unions' main aim was to demand that the education minister at the time, Fred Mulley, should intervene under the 1944 Education Act. Mulley based his case on the grounds that the Council was 'acting unreasonably'. While the unions marked time, the Tories seized their chance. Reactionary teachers were lined up by the Tories to implement their selection procedures.

By staking everything on Mulley's efforts to defend the comprehensive system through the law courts, the unions allowed the Tories to go ahead and missed forcing the council to change its plans. The unions were left helpless when the Law Lords backed the Tories to the hilt.

The Tameside experience should be a sharp lesson. The Labour Government and the National Union of Teachers were unable to defend comprehensive education - a central plank of both their programmes - against the opposition of one reactionary local authority.

It is true that the Tories of Tameside had the massive financial support of the National Association for Freedom behind them, the sinister organisation which maintains links with the Tories through Boyson and Thatcher and the far right through Dowager Lady Birdwood. They got the support of the Law Lords, and the weight of the law behind them.

But the Labour Government could have mobilised even more powerful forces in defence of comprehensive education. Thousands of local trade unionists were prepared to strike to defend this gain. Such action could have rallied the support of the whole labour movement on a national basis.

Future

But the Labour Government did not take that path, nor will they in the future. In fact they are quite prepared to uphold the methods by which the Tories gained their victory - as the continued persecution of the Clay Cross councillors under the Labour Government showed only too clearly.

But there is another reason. The Tories chose the method of confrontation and the axe to defeat the purpose of comprehensive education. The Labour Government applies slow strangulation through cuts in educational expenditure. Tameside's teacher-pupil ratio was and is the very worst in the whole country.

Comprehensive education and the teaching methods associated with it can only start to succeed if they are properly resourced. The Labour Government is intent that the social services and the living standards of the working class should bear the burden of the economic crisis. Even without the able assistance of the Tories, comprehensive education is suffering massive blows.

For this reason the Labour Government is more afraid of a movement that could take on the Tories one day, to fight the cuts the next, than it is of the Tories themselves.

Rhodes Boyson and the rest of the Black Paper demagogues in the Tory Party will feel heartened and encouraged by the Tameside fiasco. The Labour Government must feel that they have got away lightly. The real loser is not Mulley but the working class. Particularly those under sixteen.

Housing has been the symbol of Labour politics for decades. Yet in the middle of the 1970s a Labour Government is still incapable of giving everyone a roof over their head. Homelessness has doubled to 100,000 in the last ten years. Cathy still hasn't got a home.

While more than 200,000 building workers are on the dole, 800,000 houses either in good condition or requiring simple repairs are kept empty. Thirty thousand homeless people have been forced to squat.

The Government's response to this national scandal has been to cut £146 million off the 1977/78 housing budget. The Department of Environment is also preparing for more cuts through the circulation of 'secret' reports which use the brazen incompetence and corruption of many councils' housing programmes as a cover to suggest an almost total standstill on council building. They even suggest that London's housing problem should be solved by people leaving the city!



The real answer is to have housing policies in the interest of working people and direct action to force Labour councils to be responsible to the labour movement. Instead the Labour Govern-

HOUSEY, HOUSEY - GAMES LABOUR PLAYS

ment is lining the pockets of the financial sharks. The share of housing finance going on interest charges is soaring. The cuts mean that councils are being ordered to run housing at an increased profit to satisfy the money-lenders.

The councils' response has been to set one group of badly housed against

another. They use squatters as scapegoats. They intend mass evictions of squatters in order to move other homeless families from costly bed and breakfast accommodation into longer term, formerly squatted, slums.

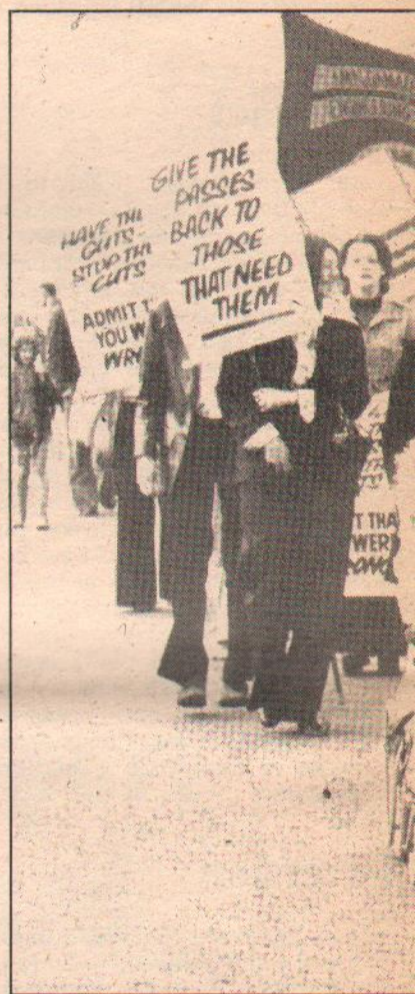
The labour movement must take up all aspects of the housing crisis and fight to defend every section of the homeless and badly housed. This

means rejection of the cuts. It means that delegates to the Labour Party Conference should organise action local parties and the wider labour movement to force councils to refuse to implement the cuts.

One example of what can be done comes from the South London borough of Lambeth. Earlier this year the Trades

Fighting Labour's Cuts

...and the way to do it



OCCUPIED. That's the situation at the Hillcrest Hostel Bury, where members of the Bury Action Group Against Cuts in the Social Services have moved in with residents to prevent the closure of a rehabilitation centre for the mentally ill. The Action Group has already notched up two important victories against the axe-madmen of Bury's Tory Council, forcing saving of Whittle Pike adult training centre and stopping closure of Ramsbottom and Radcliffe day nursery.

Tony Greehalgh, a hospital worker and a member of the Action Group, explained to Red Weekly how the occupation was planned:

'It was decided at a meeting of the Action Group to occupy the hostel, and on 12 September a meeting of residents and occupiers decided unanimously that the hostel should remain occupied. In fact the residents have said that they will resist any move to call off the occupation. The campaign cannot stop at this point, and further actions have been planned.'

Tony also sees the need to broaden the fight against cuts. As he explains, 'the Action Group was specifically formed to fight the cuts in social services, and I think it's right that they should continue in what is becoming a general campaign. But now is the time to link the fight back against the cuts with all departments which are affected, and support those sections which may be in line for the next round of cuts - not only in local government but in other areas of the public sector.'

Such a united fight won't come a minute too soon. At a very recent meeting of the Council meeting which repeated two of the seven institutions under the axe, a White Paper circular was before the Council demanding another £200 million in cuts! Already 19,000 people have signed a petition opposing the cuts, numerous meetings have been held, and a thousand angry protesters marched on a recent meeting of the Council.

The feeling is there, but it has to be organised. It's worth that end in mind that the call has gone out for a one-day conference for people in trade unions, the Labour Party, action groups and women's groups to discuss how the fight can be carried forward. It's a fight which must be waged not just against Bury's Tory Council, but against the central policies of the Labour Government which give these butchers their rein.



Nurses at Solihull Hospital near Birmingham have decided

Council sponsored an enquiry into the housing needs of the Villa Road area. It concluded that demolition and 'anti-squatting vandalism' and evictions should stop, and repairs be done instead on the Old Loughborough Estate.

The Council ignored them — so a united force of tenants, squatters and building workers threatened to start the repairs. Lambeth Council, fearing that its own building workers might start redeploying council labour and resources from demolition to repairs and building, promptly caved in and started the repairs.

It is this type of united action which needs to be extended to stop and reverse the housing cuts.

Against the Government's programme of evictions and lay-offs, the labour movement must fight for homes and jobs for all through a crash programme of repairs and homebuilding. And the system where councils run housing at a profit in order to pay the finance houses has to be stopped through the cancellation of all debt charges on money borrowed for houses and the nationalisation of the finance houses into a single state bank.

PIERS CORBYN

NHS - CONDITION CRITICAL

'We have reached the stage where it has become more dangerous for some patients to be on the waiting list than to undergo major surgery.' So said a surgeon at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, reviewing the state of the health service at the time of last year's Labour Party Conference.

That conference passed a resolution (Composite 30) stating that it 'views with concern the inadequacies of the National Health Service and calls upon the leadership of the Labour Party and trade union movement to pledge itself to a socialist policy for the Health Service.' This resolution, moved by NUPE, went on to reject 'any cuts in the National Health Service' and put forward a series of measures needed to safeguard the health care of working people and to develop the services of the NHS.

It should come as no surprise that the Labour leaders and the TUC, staunch defenders of workers democracy that they are, have totally ignored this as well as other decisions of the Labour Party Conference. What is more, they have

ruled 'out of order' any reference to Composite 30 in the motions at this year's conference.

Dr Cyril Chantler, a specialist at Guy's Hospital in London, has spelt out what the present policies of the Labour Government will mean for one group of patients. He said recently: 'Of the ninety children in the country suffering from kidney failure who need treatment from kidney machines this year, sixty won't be offered treatment and will die.'

Lopped

In the twelve months since the last conference, Healey at the behest of the international bankers and city financiers has lopped a cool £355 million from the NHS budget — £70 million from next year's funds alone. On top of these cuts in capital funds for the next four years, cash limits have been introduced while the Hospital Price Index is rising at a rate of over 25 per cent a year.

At present, behind the doors of the DHSS, Regional and Area Health Authorities, the planners are doing the callous sums and drawing up their plans to carry out Labour's cuts. They have devised three main ways to make the cuts:

1. Closing Hospitals and Slashing Building Programmes

Although the planners are (with good reason) very secretive about their proposals, well over 100 hospitals are known to have been designated for closure within the next 12 to 18 months. Many more closures are undoubtedly in the pipeline. A secret DHSS document for London revealed that no half-hearted measures were being considered. It proposed the eventual closing of well over 100 hospitals in Inner London alone!

The building programmes of the NHS have been favourite targets for cuts by successive governments — only 77 hospitals have been built in the 28 years of the NHS. Now they are to be slashed again, and the NHS will have to make do with the Victorian hospitals it inherited.

It will have to put up with hospitals which suffer from the 'partial spontaneous disintegration' of the Forest Gate Hospital in East London, and operating theatres such as the ones at Walsall General where 'water pours through the roof and walls' when it rains.

In stark contrast to the plight of the NHS, it has been estimated that well over £150 million is immediately available for investment in private hospitals and clinics. Sixty private hospitals are in the pipeline, thirty of which have already received planning permission. Private practice sees rich pickings to be made out of Labour's dismantling of the NHS!

2. Cutting Staffing Levels

'Dear Pupil Nurse: The financial position is such that it will not be possible to continue to employ you in the district once your training is completed....'

Letters like this one, sent out recently to 90 trainee nurses in Liverpool, are dropping into the letter-boxes of more and more nurses. In the last nine months, the number of trained nurses on the dole has more than doubled. Yet at the same time the health service is crying out for more staff.

Last summer the Surrey Area Health Authority asked for an extra £2 million to employ the thousand nurses needed to bring the staffing levels in its hospitals up to those for 'safe care'. In line with Labour's policy, the reply from the regional planners was a cut of £2 million.

An example of the extent of the cuts in staff now being demanded comes from Hackney in East London where management last week announced that 400 jobs were to be axed in the area by November!

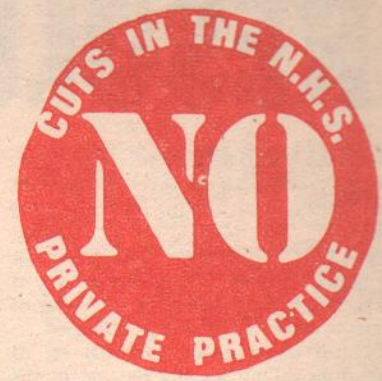
Now wards are left in the charge of pupil nurses and even untrained nursing auxiliaries (they are cheaper to employ).

Two recent official reports point out the results of this policy. The deaths of four patients at Darlington Memorial Psychiatric Hospital and the suicides of twenty-one patients at Warringham Park Hospital were blamed on the desperate shortage of staff. At both hospitals there was only money enough to employ half the nurses needed to reach official standards.

Faced with the murderous consequences of his policies, Health Minister David Ennals can only retreat behind the most sickening cynicism. The deaths at Darlington were 'an unlucky accident'!

On the most conservative estimate, over 100,000 jobs are threatened with Healey's axe in the near future.

3. Priorities for Health Care



outlining the changes in the priorities of funding the different branches of the NHS. This does not mean that we can expect to see hospital beds in the streets and car parks. But it will mean that more patients will have to be cared for at home.

Under the guise of giving extra help to the 'cinderellas' of the NHS — the care of the old, mentally and physically handicapped, the mentally ill and children — massive cuts are justified in other areas of the service. The maternity service is to be cut by £10 million (although the birth rate is expected to rise from next year) and the general hospital service is to get practically no extra funds (although spending on the DHSS's own admission has to rise at least by two per cent a year just to stand still).

Prong

'Keep patients out of the hospitals' is the theme of this prong of the DHSS's strategy. The care of these 'priorities' is to be mainly provided by the community health services.

But these have been starved of funds for years. There are only 4,500 residential places for the mentally ill, although over 25,000 patients' could be released from incarceration in mental hospitals if such places were available. One AHA in south London admitted that 'few if any areas will reach the desirable levels of staffing' in the community health services.

The solution for the DHSS is to pass the burden of care for the sick and convalescents onto working class families and particularly women. 'The often forgotten aunts and grandmothers' are to provide the cure the Labour Government refuses to fund.

'We have to choose in the short-term between hospitals and factories. For the time being we cannot do justice to both — we have got to put factories first.' So said Leslie Huckfield, Under-Secretary of State for Industry.

In other words, this Labour Government is prepared to sacrifice the health care of millions of working people to boost the profits of the bankers, financiers and industrialists. This is no matter of 'belt-tightening' but of misery, pain and death. It is clear that the Heales, Callaghans and Ennals of the Labour and trade union movement will deliver on all the calls for working class blood made by the present day Rothschilds and Rockerfellers.

Breaking

The health care of the working class, the defence of the NHS can only be achieved by breaking totally with the policies of this Government and their accomplices in the TUC. United action by the organised workers movement to stop hospital closures, to stop redundancies among health workers, to stop the growth of private practice is now urgently needed.

To begin with, this means support for all struggles of hospital workers against the cuts from trade unions and Labour Parties, supporting and building pickets of health authorities planning the cuts, mass demonstrations, etc.

It means demanding that all members of the Labour Party and trade union movement on health authorities reveal all the plans or be replaced. It means the replacement of all Labour MPs who do not vote and campaign against the cuts.

Most important of all, it is crucial that a united campaign of action is built to



NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AGAINST CUTS IN THE NHS

LOBBY the Labour Party Conference
DEMAND the implementation of Composite 30 passed at last year's conference

TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER

12-2 p.m.

Blackpool Winter Gardens Conference Hall

Conference Meetings

- SCOTLAND:**
'Labour Against Assemblies in Scotland', many speakers, including Heffer, Kinnoch, Skinner. Imperial Hotel (Warbeck Room), North Promenade, Sunday 26 September, 4.30pm.
'Hear the other side of the argument', organised by Hemel Hempstead LPYS, speaker Alex Neil, General Secretary, Scottish Labour Party. Kings Arms, Talbot Road (opposite railway station), Monday 27 September, 6.00pm.
'Pro-Devolution Rally', organised by Berwick and East Lothian CLP, speakers include Alex Kitson. Trades Club, Chadwick Street, Tuesday 28 September, 5.15pm.
RACISM:
'Race Relations: What Must Be Done', organised by Labour Race Relations Action Group, with Alex Lyon in the Chair. Imperial Hotel (Warbeck and Egerton Rooms), North Promenade, Tuesday 28 September, 5.15pm.
'Labour and the Struggle Against Racism', organised by Red Weekly supporters in the Labour Party. Kings Arms, Talbot Road (opposite railway station), Thursday 30 September, 6.00pm.
HEALTH:
'A Socialist Health Service — Still the Greatest Need', organised by the Socialist Medical Association, with Barbara Castle. Town Hall, Town Hall Street, Tuesday 28 September, 5.15pm.
'NHS Cuts Kill — Fight for a Socialist Solution', organised by the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS, with Ernie Roberts, Dr. Berry Beaumont. Kings Arms, Talbot Road (opposite railway station), Wednesday 29 September, 6.00pm.
GENERAL:
'Ireland — What Labour Must Do', organised by Troops Out Movement, with Joan Maynard MP, Bernadette Devlin. North Bank Hotel (adjacent to Imperial Hotel), 320 North Promenade, Monday 27 September, 6.45pm.
'The Struggle for Industrial and Political Democracy', organised by the Institute for Workers Control, with Tony Benn, Stuart Holland. Planet Room, Winter Gardens, Sunday 26 September, 6.30pm.
'Labour Policy: Who Decides — Cabinet or

'Phasing out' the disabled

Over 100 handicapped people were forced to take to the streets of Birmingham last Monday to stage a mass protest rally against the Government's decision to 'phase out' invalid trikes. They are to be replaced by a £5 a week mobility allowance.

Although trikes are considered dangerous, this is one of the unkindest cuts of all, as invalids have no other method of getting

essary regulations.'
Councillor Allen has yet to learn that capitalism prefers the money-spinning potential of Concorde to the welfare of the disabled. After all, an ideal four-wheeled car could be readily available if the Government nationalised the Lucas empire, which is busily sacking workers, and produced the electric car with simple controls outlines in

THE KEY RESOLUTIONS

Despite the fact that the conference organisers have ruled out of order 39 motions from Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) calling for the re-selection of 'sitting' Labour MPs, the issue won't go unheard at this year's conference. A reference back of the agenda is being moved by a number of parties to allow this issue to be discussed.

Even if unsuccessful, the first set of resolutions calling for the election of the Labour leader by the Labour conference raises the same issue of workers democracy. The clearest call comes from Bristol South East CLP, which calls for the leader to be elected 'annually at the Party Conference commencing at the annual conference 1977'.

No doubt reflecting the weight of the TUC's collaboration with the Government, few resolutions are openly critical of the social contract. Nevertheless an alternative to wage-cutting is posed in a motion from Liverpool Walton CLP, which calls on the Government 'to implement a minimum living wage of at least £50 for a 35-hour week, to be linked to the cost of living and regularly increased to keep pace with price rises'.

Unemployment and the cuts also figure largely, but few put the Party on the spot on the question. However, Colchester CLP urges the Labour Party at all levels to conduct an active campaign against the proposed cuts in public expenditure, the unemployment they will cause, and unemployment in general.

Better still, Battersea South CLP calls on conference to support 'Labour councils which have refused to implement the cuts, and calls on other Labour groups to follow suit'. Scarborough CLP clearly spells out the alternative if such a fight back isn't waged — 'the Labour Government will be defeated at the next General Election'.

Encouraging is the number of CLPs supporting the repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act and other anti-immigration laws. Wallasey CLP goes on to call for a ban on the National Front, National Party, British

Movement and other fascist organisations, while Norwood CLP also calls for 'full support to the efforts of the black community to defend themselves against these fascist provocations'.

There are also many resolutions demanding implementation of the Child Benefits Scheme by the Government, while Lambeth Central regards the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts as 'empty gestures, so long as women remain tied to the home through lack of child care facilities'. Southgate calls on conference to recognise that 'every woman has the right to work and every child has the right to the benefits of a nursery place'.

On the international scene, motions demand a complete arms embargo and action against South Africa, isolation of the Chilean Junta; and from the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation comes a call for action in support of democratic rights in Argentina... 'only the working people of Argentina are capable, through their own organisation, of solving the country's problems, and... they require the fullest possible liberty to achieve this end'.

Finally the vexed question of Northern Ireland finds itself expressed in Militant-sponsored resolutions supporting the diversionary Better Life for All campaign and utopian conceptions of a trade union defence force in the North of Ireland. But Stockport South CLP demands 'clear opposition to the sectarian state of Northern Ireland' and recognises 'the role of the British army in maintaining the existence of this state... It is impossible to raise the call for working class unity in the Six Counties so long as the British Government supports the right of the "loyalist" working class to maintain their sectarian privileges at the expense of the nationalist population.'

Along with Brent East, Hackney North and Stoke Newington CLPs, they call for troops out now and recognise the right of the whole of the Irish people to self-determination.



'We want positive action against racism'

LABOUR regained the St. Jude's ward in Blackburn from the fascists in a local by-election last Thursday. The National Party had won the seat in May, but this time Labour topped the poll with 1,597 votes to the National Party's 767 and the National Front's 363.

This victory owed little to the fickle attitude of the local Labour Party which pulled out of the anti-racist demonstration in Blackburn on 11 September as soon as the National Front announced that it was holding a rival meeting. It owed much, however, to the 4,000 anti-racists who marched that day to show their determination to stop the fascists. It owed much to groups like the Asian Youth Organisation, which have organised consistently against the racist offensive. AYO leader KHADIM QUARISHI told Red Weekly how they had built their campaign.

After the 29 May demonstration in Blackburn, the youth in Blackburn became very dissatisfied with the pacifist policies of the traditional leaders towards racism and fascism. Because of the traditional leaders' refusal to struggle against racism, 15 of us set up an ad-hoc committee around the politics of black self-defence. This committee was later to become the Blackburn Asian Youth Organisation, which has now got the support of all the youth in Blackburn.

The traditional leaders totally opposed the formation of the AYO. They realise that the AYO is an alternative leadership for the

community. I myself was attacked by people opposed to us, but they have failed to break the enthusiasm of the youth in the struggle against the fascists and racists.

Three months ago, in June, Asian workers were attacked by fascists in the Boulevard returning from the late shift. To combat this we gathered youths to go down to the Boulevard to ensure the safe return of the workers. Harassment by the fascists stopped soon after we did this.

We were also harassed by the police when they discovered that we were defending ourselves. The police came to our workplaces where they questioned us about

the formation of the AYO. Even when we were standing on the street talking the police came and searched us. When they found nothing they charged us with obstruction.

We are at the moment encouraging our members to join the Labour Party in order to fight for positive action from within around black self-defence. We are also taking steps for our members to become more greatly involved in the trade unions to support us in the struggle around black self-defence against the fascists. I myself am trying to get on the trades council with the intention of enlisting their support and bringing about the formation of an anti-racist sub-committee.

Ashley and Durdham Labour Party branches in Bristol are refusing to distribute one of the national leaflets issued by the Labour Party because it refers to immigration controls and is thus reactionary. Meanwhile Bristol anti-racism action group is working for a week of action which will include a demonstration calling for the Council to extend its ban on the National Front. Support is being sought from Labour Party branches and Young Socialists, who have already called for such a ban.

'We won't let abortion rights be forgotten'

Red Weekly asked BERRY BEAUMONT, a delegate to the Labour Party Conference from the Socialist Medical Association and a prominent activist in the National Abortion Campaign, to write on how the abortion issue is being raised inside the party.

The National Abortion Campaign intends to make sure that the issue of abortion is not forgotten at the Labour Party Conference. A team of NAC activists will be arriving in Blackpool to win support for the resolution on abortion, to begin the task of building for the national 'Tribunal for Women's Abortion Rights' planned for 29 January, and to encourage delegates to attend a fringe meeting on Monday night.

All of this activity will help NAC activists delegated to the Conference to begin to co-ordinate the growing opposition within the Labour Party to the present Labour Government's attacks on women's abortion rights. This coordination is essential if the dangers of a restrictive Private Member's Bill in November are to be brought home to every member of the Labour Party.

A meeting at the Labour Party Women's Conference took the first steps in this direction with a call for a national campaign inside the party. However, to date the support for such a campaign remains dispersed. For example, in Hertfordshire a local Labour for Abortion Campaign has been launched. In East Finchley no campaign as such has been launched, but there has been an important struggle nevertheless.

In the case of this CLP, a resolution calling for affiliation to NAC was met

of the debate he even walked out of the meeting in disgust!

However, thanks to the determination of the women in the CLP, this candidate was soundly defeated in the subsequent selection procedure and was replaced by one who supports the National Abortion Campaign and the 1967 Abortion Act. As one of the women in the CLP commented: 'The fight we organised on this issue will be the best way to make sure that the new candidate can't sell out on women's rights so easily in the future!'

The responsibility of MPs on the abortion issue — which is a class responsibility — has also been raised in several recent struggles in constituencies like Newham North-East and Hammersmith North to remove MPs with clear anti-working class policies. In the Midlands, NAC activists in the Labour Party are beginning to co-ordinate regionally and hope to get a regional conference on this issue.

The lack of any real fight for the implementation of the resolution adopted by last year's Labour Party Conference has laid the basis for the present restrictions now being proposed in Parliament, as well as those implemented daily through the savage attacks on the NHS. The task of organising this opposition is therefore ever more pressing. A national focus for grouping this opposition will be

the FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY in the LABOUR PARTY



5p

A Red Weekly Pamphlet

This Conference demands that all the policy decisions of this and all future annual conferences of the Labour Party shall be mandatory policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party, whether the Party is in government or opposition.

This resolution from Ince CLP will sum up the feelings of the majority of constituency delegates. More than 30 resolutions have been submitted on the subject of automatic re-selection of MPs. The National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS has called a lobby of conference demanding the implementation of last year's conference policy on the health service. A big row is in the pipeline over the use of the infamous and anti-democratic 'three-year rule'.

Why is the Labour Party so undemocratic? What is the significance of the fight for democracy in the Labour Party? How can Labour Party activists most effectively contribute to that fight?

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7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

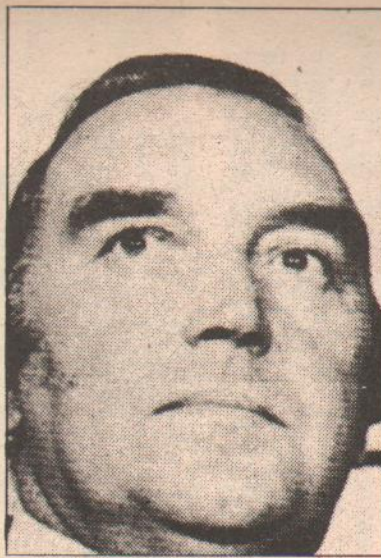
Roy Mason's appointment as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland was greeted with much glee in Loyalist circles here. Ian Paisley, who saw the transfer of Merlyn Rees as 'the best thing that has happened in the last two years', was delighted at the prospect of a British minister fully under the sway of the British Army hawks.

The Loyalists hope that Mason, previously Minister of Defence, will adopt an even tougher policy against the Republican resistance than his predecessors. Certainly, on past trips to Belfast he has been eager to act the apologist for British Army excesses. During his period at the Defence Ministry, Mason developed a close relationship with the British military high command, and closely identified with the whole range of counter-insurgency tactics used by the British Army in the Six Counties.

British involvement in Ireland has always meant repression and the use

of military force to quell opposition. Mason's appointment would seem to indicate more of the same — only worse. It was in fact Republican News which spelt out the exact meaning of this appointment. Its headline ran: 'Mr Military Solution Arrives'. We can safely predict that the British troops, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Defence Regiment will be given even greater leeway in their campaign of harassment aimed at demoralising the nationalist population.

Mason's appointment, however, does not simply herald a stepping up of repression on the part of the so-called security forces. The Loyalist para-militaries will match their every move. The UDA, UFF, UVF see themselves as shock-troops of imperialism, plugging the gaps left by alleged British 'vacillation' and 'softness'. Every repressive action by the British Army or the RUC acts as a spur to the Loyalist para-militaries to step up their murderous assassination cam-



ROY MASON



MERLYN REES

paings.

Of course, Mason in his initial address to the population of the Six Counties was anxious to play down the fears of the nationalist people. He pledged that there would be no change in British policy: the law would be applied 'evenly' throughout all sections of the population. Yet as he spoke the UDA were burning buses, planting bombs and building barricades on the streets of Belfast while the forces of law and order stood by and did not one thing. Only one arrest has been reported at the end of a week-long series of protests.

This low profile of the Crown forces has not been extended to Catholic

districts. The raids and house searches, the arrests and interrogation, have continued as usual here. But then, as one British soldier told me last week when I was held for screening: 'We have no reason to search Protestant houses — they don't attack us.'

No wonder, then, that Social Democratic & Labour Party leader Gerry Fitt condemned the appointment of Mason as 'disastrous'. For Fitt, though, it was not concern for Catholic workers that prompted this statement, but rather fear that a tougher line by Mason would 'drive people into the hands of the men of violence'. In other words, that any stepping up of repression without the

cover of a 'political settlement' would reveal the British Army as the real gunmen on the streets in the Six Counties, and lead to increased support for the IRA.

Undoubtedly, repression will be escalated in the months ahead. Meeting this offensive gun for gun, as the Provisional IRA promise to do, is an inadequate and at the present time positively counter-productive response. The greatest ally that the British Army and the Loyalists have is the growing disillusionment within anti-Unionist districts, which has swelled the peace marches and acts as a cover for the repression.

It is in fighting to remove this disillusionment by political clarity that real resistance to repression can be built and the responsibility for the violence placed where it belongs — with the British ruling class.

During the UDA protests last week, an interesting confrontation took place on the local TV channel between UUUC MP Robert Bradford and a UDA spokesperson named Ruddy. Bradford was alleging that non-Loyalists were behind the protests, and said he had evidence that Communists had infiltrated the UDA.

If there is one brand of politics more loathed by Loyalists than even Republicanism, then it is Communism. Not surprisingly, therefore, Ruddy foamed at the mouth and insisted that Bradford 'give the names to the RUC so that the UDA can have a look at them'. Say no more.



GENERAL STRIKE! - Greece 24-25 May this year. Police attack demonstrators then try to frame victims.

Greek torturers go free as victims face trial

GIANNIS FELEKIS spent over five years in prison under the colonels, was exiled for nine months after the events at the Athens Polytechnic in November 1973, and was tortured for two solid months by the military police. Now, together with 13 other members of left organisations, he faces another possible two-year prison sentence.

All are charged with conspiracy to 'incite the crowd [at the 24-25 May general strike demonstrations] to throw stones at policemen and to engage in violence against the police and state'. Some of the accused were not even present at the mobilisations, yet the Karamanlis Government is attempting to pin the blame for police violence on the victims of that violence.

Felekis, who was there reporting for his newspaper *Ergatiki Pali* [Workers Struggle], told *Red Weekly* what really happened:

'The police asked the demonstrators to stop their march until they received formal approval, although we already had a permit for the demonstration. While we were

shed.'

The stakes for the Karamanlis Government are much larger than the conviction of these 14 people. As with the Shrewsbury trials, they concern the basic right to strike, the right of free speech, and the legality of conspiracy laws.

Strike

Following the general strike of the Greek working class on 24-25 May, proposed new legislation aims to restrict the right of assembly and demonstration. Another proposed law would authorise the police to open fire on any rally whose participants refuse to disperse at police command.

Not content to wait until Parliament formally passes these laws, the Government hopes to capitalise on the small size of the revolutionary organisations involved to wrest a quick conviction of the 14. Already

class paper to appear on the streets after the fall of the colonels. Felekis, the editor at the time, was arrested by Greek secret police for selling the paper 'without a permit'; and when that didn't stick, the judge accused Felekis of 'profiteering' — Felekis was charging 3 drachmas (5p) for the newspaper!

On 18 August 1974 he was again arrested while trying to cover a demonstration for his paper. As he testified:

'My arrest must have looked like one of the more brutal scenes of the evening. As the police threw me to the ground, they kicked me and beat me with their clubs and fists. They were so infuriated that they often hit each other.'

Once in the station he was beaten more savagely: 'After a while they took me to a wash basin and shoved my head under water every time they finished a round..... Our faces were bruised and lacerated.'

He still bears these scars today, plus those acquired on his feet after his arrest this year. He dismissed them with a laugh when

But 'detente' is the watchword of both the Interior and Exterior Communist Parties, and explains their refusal to attack the anti-working class and anti-democratic measures of the Karamanlis Government.

The KKE (Communist Party of the Exterior, hard-line pro-Moscow) has even resorted to calling for the dissolution of far left groups, according to Felekis. They say: 'Karamanlis knows these groups very well. They are nests of fascist elements.' Thus they absolve themselves of their responsibility to defend these 14 opponents of the anti-strike legislation on the basis that their groups 'harbour fascists'.

PASOK

However, the PASOK, a social democratic party whose youth group won the largest vote in the recent student elections, has taken the position of calling for the dropping of all charges against the 14. PASOK correctly places the responsibility

WHAT'S ON

THE FINAL DEADLINE for notices for 'What's On' is 10am on the Monday before publication. Adverts are only accepted over the phone in exceptional circumstances. Rate: 2p per word.

FIGHT RACISM badge available again. 25p inc. p&p from Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Bulk rates on application.

RACISM, Imperialism and Apartheid in South Africa—weekend educational conference at the University of East Anglia, 29-31 October. For details contact Students Union, University of East Anglia, Norwich.

GLASGOW Socialist Forums: every Thursday night, at 7.30pm in the Iona Community Centre.

POSTER for the defence of Iranian political prisoners (3 colours, A2). Single copies 30p (plus 6½p postage). 10 or more copies, 20p each. From: Red Books (Iranian Poster), 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

NATIONAL GAY CAUCUS: open to all comrades in the IMG who either identify as gay or who do not but have gay relationships. 9-10 October in Nottingham. For discussion papers, documents and further information, contact Char Stannier, 58 Surf Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham (0602 76410).

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and 'Srani-Dal-Biplab' (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalen, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

IRELAND: Britain must withdraw—what Labour must do. Labour Party Conference meeting for delegates, with speakers Bernadette Devlin, Joan Maynard MP, Tom Litterick MP, ex-soldier (recently served in Ireland), Mike Davies (Hackney N. & Stoke Newington CLP), Paddy Prendiville (TOM). Mon 27 Sept, 6.45pm, North Bank Hotel, 320 North Promenade, Blackpool. Organised by TOM.

CAMPAIGN For Democracy in the Labour Movement: Hackney public meeting, Tues 28 Sept, 7.30pm in Dalston Library, Dalston Lane, E8. Labour movement speakers.

PUBLIC RALLY of the International-Communist League: The Lessons of Portugal and Building a Revolutionary International. Speaker from I-CL Political Committee. Guest speakers from Spartacusbund (Germany), Lega Comunista (Italy), and Internationale Kommunistische Liga (Austria). Sunday 26 September, 8 pm, at Skinners Arms, Judd St., WC1.

WANTED: Comrade(s) for a large room in communal household in NW5. Preferably interested in exploring the possibilities of a long-term commitment to an alternative life-style. £55 p.m. inclusive. Phone 01-485 0077.

RED WEEKLY Fund-raising party, Saturday 9 October, in Golden Eagle, Hill St., Birmingham. Starts 7.30 pm. Booze, disco, etc.

victory for the right-wing Karamanlis Government. And while it is using the courts to victimise leftists, the junta's torturers are going scot free.

A year ago it was reported that 150 police and gendarmier officers would be brought to trial for torture in the Athens area. The lower courts finally recommended the trial of 28 officers for 'felonies'. The Appeal Court then stepped in, reduced the charges to 'misdemeanours', and cleared 12 of the 28 altogether — including one officer who was named in seven separate torture complaints to the Council of Europe.

But the scars of mass imprisonment and torture borne by the Greek working class are still too fresh for them to submit readily to a repeat of the past 30 years.

Red Weekly asks all members of the labour movement to support the democratic right of free speech for these fourteen comrades. The trial begins on 29 September. Please send telegrams supporting the dropping of all charges (also financial



A Japanese soldier and disarmed Chinese policeman after Japan has entered Tientsin in 1931. The war destroyed the economy and disintegrated the urban proletariat.

Mao's Achievement

AN ASSESSMENT BY ERNEST MANDEL

Mao represented above all the victory of the third Chinese revolution, the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the landowners in the most populous country of the world, the breaking of the imperialist encirclement of the USSR, and the fundamental transformation of the balance of forces on a world scale. However much we oppose the bureaucratic regime that exists today in the People's Republic of China, we must judge the role of Mao in the history of the twentieth century primarily on the basis of his relationship with the fundamental classes of the contemporary world.

The victory of the third revolution, of which he was the most important architect, was the most important event of the twentieth century since the October socialist revolution in Russia. China is not just any country. It is a country, once the richest and most advanced in the world, where the interference of foreign capitalism in the nineteenth century had prevented the development of an autonomous imperialist power like that which the ruling classes of Japan managed to create at the last minute.



Victory in the 'third' Chinese revolution came with Mao's refusal in practise to subordinate the Peoples Liberation Army to Chiang Kai-shek.

famine and misery. No subsequent event can wipe out the praise that is due to Mao for his role in the victory of the socialist revolution in China.

The third Chinese revolution was not a 'normal' socialist revolution. It occurred after a long and destructive war waged by Japanese imperialism against China — a war that destroyed the economy and disintegrated the urban proletariat. This objective fact, together with the deliberate stifling of the struggles of that proletariat by Mao, resulted in the lack of any autonomous role by the working class in the third revolution.

The leadership of the revolutionary process was in the hands of a highly bureaucratized Communist Party which prevented the development of soviets and workers councils in China. The Chinese revolution was a bureaucratized revolution from the start.

Mao was not Lenin, but nor was he Stalin, precisely because he led a

revolution and not a counter-revolution. However, the revolution he led was not in its forms of organisation an authentically proletarian revolution, although it had the historical and social content: the destruction of bourgeois power and property, and the destruction of the bourgeois state.

Bureaucratic

But if Mao was not Lenin or Stalin, the bureaucratic regime that he set up in the People's Republic of China had a number of similarities with the Stalinist regime in the USSR: the suppression of proletarian democracy, the lack of workers management in the factories, the pragmatic distortion of Marxism, the cult of the personality of Mao, the material privileges of the bureaucracy. To explain these phenomena exclusively in terms of the backwardness of China, which is obviously one of the roots of bureaucratism, is to underestimate the importance of the subjective factor and the dynamic of the mass movement in China.

It is there that the really tragic dimension of the ageing Mao appears. He worried about the effect of the bureaucratism of the party and of the country on the depoliticisation of the masses, in the image of what had happened in the USSR. Finding himself in a minority on the leadership of the party after the failure of the 'Great Leap Forward', he by-passed the party apparatus to address himself to the masses. This was the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, which had similarities with the youth radicalisation in the rest of the world.

It was launched under the slogan: 'In the final analysis, the lessons of history come back to this: revolt is justified.' But when the mass mobilisations increasingly went beyond the control of the Maoist faction, when they led to the appearance of left opposition tendencies, when they started to involve workers, even to the



Impoverished

Tens of millions of impoverished peasants and craftsmen had for decades lived under a regime of misery, oppression and humiliation which became every day more unbearable. They revolted many times, from the rebellion of Tai-Ping to that of the Boxers, from the revolution of 1911 to that of 1925-27. But there was no possible political outcome to these uprisings until the development of a working class sufficiently powerful to contest the political and organisational leadership of the agrarian revolution.

Breaking the stranglehold of imperialism, modernising the country, freeing the peasantry from the grip of the landowners and moneylenders was only made possible by the establishment of proletarian leadership inside the Chinese revolution, the transformation of the bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist one, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Tragic

The second Chinese revolution ended in a tragic defeat in 1927 because Stalin compelled the young Communist Party to subordinate itself politically to the bourgeois Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek.

The third Chinese revolution was victorious because, in spite of erroneous manifestoes such as the 'New Democracy', Mao refused in practice to subordinate the People's Liberation Army — which arose out of the anti-Japanese guerilla struggle — to the army of Chiang Kai-shek and refused to sacrifice the peasant uprisings for the sake of a coalition government with the bourgeoisie. The third Chinese revolution ended in the



extent of strike action, Mao made a complete turn and reunited with the majority of the leadership.

The 'Red Guards' were disciplined and reorganised. The slogan became: 'Any revolt is justified, except the revolt against Mao Tse-tung thought'.

Right turn

The domestic right turn was accompanied by an even more pronounced right turn in foreign policy. After having denounced the Soviet leaders for their lack of support for revolutionary movements and their excessive concessions to imperialism, the Maoist leadership discovered the existence of 'social-imperialism' in the USSR, then of two 'super-powers' which were placed on the same footing, and finally it discovered that 'young' Soviet imperialism was more aggressive and therefore more dangerous.

We need only recall China's cynical betrayal of the revolutionary movements in Ceylon, Sudan and Ethiopia,

The Sino-Soviet conflict (for which the Khrushchevite bureaucracy must bear the main responsibility for having stopped its economic and military aid to the People's Republic of China), and then the Cultural Revolution had exerted a real attraction for the new vanguards on a world scale. Maoism appeared at the same time as a leftist and Third Worldist (and even libertarian) alternative to the official Communist Parties. The end of the Cultural Revolution, the right turn in Chinese foreign policy, the transformation of Maoist organisations into neo-Stalinist sects has deeply tarnished this image. Mao died as Maoism was entering into decline on an international scale.

Mao leaves a People's Republic of China in full ferment. In marked contrast to the USSR of the 1940's and '50's, the masses are neither demoralised nor passive. The inter-bureaucratic struggle for the succession will not be decided without an intervention of these masses.

The crisis of Maoism has opened up as from now. It will result in the victory of the political anti-bureaucratic revolution, in the exercise of



China after Mao

In last week's Red Weekly SHAN SHUANG, a veteran revolutionary living outside China, wrote that Mao's death 'could well create an expectancy of change in the psychology of the Chinese masses. The effect of this will be to increase popular dissatisfaction and heighten the popular struggle'. Here he explains the forms this is likely to take.

The popular struggle will most probably first erupt among the millions of intellectual youth despatched into the countryside. Their demands are likely to centre on issues such as 'reforms in the standard of living', 'demands for democracy', and 'opposition to bureaucratic arbitrariness and privilege'.

Hoping to exploit popular dissatisfaction in their own factional interests, it is quite likely that the rival groupings within the Communist Party leadership will make gestures of sympathy and support for the aspirations of the masses, encouraging and calling for the granting of those demands most to their liking.

For example, the 'Maoists' will probably put the emphasis on 'equality' and 'opposition to bureaucratic privilege', while the 'non-Maoists' will encourage the calls for 'democracy and socialist legality' and 'opposition to bureaucratic dictatorship'. They may even go so far as to bring sections of the masses into the streets in pursuit of these demands.

Strictest

But such a process could only take place within the strictest limits. As soon as the anti-bureaucratic struggle begins to develop in a genuinely revolutionary direction, challenging the bureaucracy as a whole, the factional struggle within the leadership will come to an abrupt end. The rival leadership groupings will unite to suppress the masses — which was exactly what happened in the final stages of the Cultural Revolution.

For many years self-proclaimed 'China-watchers' have been predicting rapid civil disorder upon the death of Mao — in particular a clash between the army and the party. Some have gone so far as to envisage a civil war between the commanders of the various armed forces, or an armed confrontation between the People's Liberation Army and the People's Militia. The mistake these 'China-watchers' make is to confuse China today with the 1920's and 1930's when the country was ruled by war-lords. This is wrong for several reasons.

Firstly, China today is independent and unified, not only politically but economically. The main reason for war-lordism in the past was behind-the-scenes manipulation by rival imper-

of ideological tempering and revolutionary struggle, and is unlikely to become the personal property of any one ambitious individual. Taiwan's dream of winning a mainland general to their side is out-dated wishful thinking.

Conflict

Thirdly, all the men in power in the armed forces belong to the same 'Maoist' or centre political tendency, and despite the absence of internationalism in the higher bodies of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), there is no tendency aiming to restore capitalism.

In the long term, however, the danger of such conflict does exist. Since they lack the resources to solve the problems of poverty and underdevelopment and have abandoned an internationalist perspective, the leaders of the CCP are forced to turn either to the Soviet Union or to the United States for help. They have already tried the former, with very unpleasant results. Since the early 1970's, the USA has been the object of China's diplomatic attentions.

For the CCP leaders and the 'radicals' in particular, this is what is known as 'exploiting the contradictions of the enemy'. They claim that this has no effect on their 'radicalism' on the domestic front, but it is a principle of Marxism that foreign policy is a continuation of domestic policy, and vice versa.

Collaboration with the leaders of world reaction is sooner or later bound to have an effect within China, pushing domestic policies further to the right and facilitating the emergence of a group genuinely interested in the restoration of capitalism. Under such conditions a civil war launched by the rightists would loom imminent.

In an attempt to forestall such a possibility, the new leaders of the CCP will probably attempt to improve relations with the Soviet Union while continuing the policy of 'normalisation' with the US — although the prospect of a return to the situation prior to the Sino-Soviet split is unlikely.

As for who will win the present factional struggle in the CCP, this

crucial question.

In the historic sense the crucial question concerns the prospects for the forces of Trotskyism and the Fourth International in China, and accepting the likely train of events the prospects can only be favourable. The urgent need for an internationalist strategic line and the demand for proletarian democracy are objectively posed by events. It is therefore very likely that long-suppressed ideas of Trotskyism will re-emerge in China, and that genuine leftists will play an active role in future struggles.

In order to meet this historical need, they must first of all make their voice heard among the broad worker and peasant masses. They must concretely expose the reactionary theory of 'socialism in one country' and the voluntarist and adventurist schemas of the Maoist faction, oppose its essentially ultra-rightist policy of 'all round dictatorship', and criticise its alliance with reactionary foreign powers. At the same time, they should fight to transform the half-hearted campaigns against privilege and corruption into a genuine revolutionary movement against the bureaucracy as a whole.

As for the 'non-Maoist' camp in the CCP leadership, the forces of a resurgent Chinese Trotskyist movement would expose its passive adaptation to objective difficulties, oppose its rightist policy of deliberately furthering the growth of a privileged stratum, and criticise its tendency towards slavish submission either to US imperialism or to the Soviet Union.

Illusions

But Trotskyists should also not forget that sections of the masses have developed certain illusions in parts of the programme of this grouping — in particular, on the issues of democracy, socialist legality and freedom. They should therefore fight to channel these misplaced aspirations in a revolutionary direction, so that they further the cause not of bourgeois but of proletarian democracy.

Most important of all, they should fight shoulder to shoulder with the broad worker and peasant masses for the realisation of such a proletarian democracy, for the establishment of genuine worker and peasant soviets, for the reawakening of international-

NO TRUCE IN SPAIN

There has been no truce in Spain this summer — on either side. Spain's authentic terrorists, the Civil Guard, and their licensed confederates in the fascist bands have added three more murders to the long catalogue of crimes being denounced throughout the Spanish state by hundreds of thousands of workers.

The first victim was Francisco Javier Verdejo, a militant of the PTE [Spanish Labour Party — a split off from the Communist Party], an 18-year-old biology student shot and killed by the Civil Guard while painting 'Bread, Work, and Freedom' on a wall in Almeria. Then Eduardo Moreno Bergaretxe [Pertur], 26, a militant of ETA[V] and the key figure in the Basque nationalist organisation's latest left turn — its [so far unclarified] plans for launching an Abertzale [patriots] workers party from the forthcoming ETA congress — was kidnapped and almost certainly murdered by a fascist commando unit, on the French side of the frontier with Spain.

The latest fascist outrage took place in Fuentarrabia during the continuing campaign for amnesty in the Basque country [Euskadi]. Following a large demonstration in this small coastal village, the Civil Guard began attacking people at random. They entered a bar on the main street and assaulted the people inside with boots and rifle butts.

Followed

Jesus Maria Zabala, a young worker of 22 from Laminaciones de Lasaca in Irun, first defended himself with a table and then ran out into the street. The Civil Guard followed him into an alleyway and shot him in the back.

By Monday of last week Euskadi was on general strike for the second time in six months. The barricades went up in Bilbao and San Sebastian. The big factories on the left bank of the Bilbao river were almost immediately closed down and 10,000 workers assembled in the centre of Sestao, calling for the dissolution of the fascist repressive apparatus and fighting hand to hand with the police for several hours. In San Sebastian on the day of the funeral — when the press estimated that over 300,000 people had mobilised throughout the province of Guipuzcoa — the barricades stayed up until late into the night.

The following day, an Investigating Commission was set up by the people of Fuentarrabia on the same lines as those set up in Vitoria, Santurce and Almeria — to investigate crimes against the mass movement. The state took a diametrically opposed initiative. Following a nation wide meeting of civil and military provincial governors, a special meeting of high ranking police officers was convened in San Sebastian.

For as this 'hot autumn' gets underway, the attention of the mass movement is acutely focused on the fascist repressive apparatus — the bourgeoisie's main counterweight against the mass movement as it is pushed into a showdown for which it

is politically unarmed. A very searching light is also being shed on the Democratic Coordination [DC], the class collaborationist alliance between tiny bourgeois groupings [of never more than a thousand 'militants'] and the large workers parties — in particular, the Spanish Communist Party.

Alliance

The contradiction within this unprincipled alliance can only be magnified by upsurges such as the general strike in Euskadi last week. While the bourgeois figureheads must be less than satisfied with their partners' impotence in heading off such explosions, the workers parties in the DC cannot long survive the repeated overshooting of their stated negotiating positions by the mass movement.

The viability of the proposed pact between the DC and the dictatorship depends on the ability of the Government to which it gives birth to satisfy and separate out the vast and intractable amalgam of political, economic and social demands long since considered by the mass movement as their legitimate interests and aspirations.

For example, with over a million unemployed [more than 8 per cent], inflation running towards 30 per cent by the end of the year, and only one in four workers receiving some form of social security, a massive assembly of the unemployed will take place in Madrid later this month. This will include in its central platform of demands: 100 per cent compensation on being laid off; official recognition of delegates elected in assemblies of the unemployed; access to and control of the unemployment figures and the employment agencies; plus a labour amnesty and the suppression of the black lists.

The demands that are being raised by this mass movement — fighting in ever growing numbers — take on a more and more overtly anti-capitalist character as the crisis deepens. This, and the profound desire of the movement for real unity — the most democratic expression of its combined force — is opening the way to a general strike throughout the Spanish state to bring down the dictatorship.

Independence

In this situation, those relatively small but rapidly growing forces that have fought consistently for the independence and self-organisation of the working class — principally our comrades of the LCR-ETA[VI] and Liga Comunista — approach the coming battles of this autumn and winter with accumulated political capital at their disposal. Writing of the POUM and the Popular Front, Trotsky remarked: 'It should never be forgotten that the revolution creates special acoustic conditions.' That was true of Spain then, and it was certainly never more true of Spain than now.

DAVID GARDNER



RED WEEKLY

AND IF I WON'T GET OFF YOUR BACK, THEN (GIGGLE) HIT ME WITH THIS

DUFFell



From Labour Research

This Act is a fraud

It says much about the Equal Opportunities Commission that Betty Lockwood has the official designation of 'chairman' of that esteemed body. Ms Lockwood herself has recently written an article for *The Times* in which she pleads: 'To our critics we say - let us all get on with the job.'

Taking these words to heart, the monthly journal *Labour Research* has recently examined the workings of Commission-inspired Industrial Tribunals on the enforcement of the Equal Pay Act. The findings serve as a warning to all those who place their faith in the judgements of arbitrators, and stand as a vindication of those such as the striking Trico women who refuse to have anything to do with Equal Pay tribunals.

One of the case histories they cite illustrates the dangers involved in even applying to a Tribunal. Two clerical women workers in F verfordwest who did just that were sacked within two days. This sacking was judged to be 'unfair' by the Tribunal - yet it also ruled that the women had not been victimised. This rather peculiar example of fairness was accompanied by a rejection of the equal pay claim itself, on the grounds that similar men's work was more 'responsible'.

Undefined

The undefinable and immeasurable norm of 'responsibility' also reared its head in the case of Ms P.M. Iliffe, who worked in GDS Transport in Leicester. The Tribunal assessing her claim for the same pay as a male worker announced that it 'is not satisfied that the work which he does is substantially different from that which is performed by the applicant'. The Tribunal also agreed that the man had 'constantly failed to undertake' more 'responsible' work than the woman was doing. Nevertheless, the woman lost her case on the basis that the

So although there was absolutely no difference in the quality or quantity of the work the man or woman did, the the woman got paid less because the judgement depended not on what was actually happening but on what the employers wanted to happen.

Peculiar

Another equal pay application which failed was the case of Ms Pitman of Birmingham. The peculiar logic used in defending the employers here was that there was no man employed by the company doing a comparable job; and a plea that a comparison should be made on the basis of what a man would be getting paid was turned down.

So while Ms Iliffe was denied equal pay on the basis of what the male employee *should* be doing, Ms Pitman's case was rejected despite her plea to compare her pay to that which a man *would* be getting. A case of heads they win, tails you lose.

The case of Ms Pitman has implications beyond the absurdities of the Equal Pay Act's legal norms. Low pay relative to men's is not just the problem of women working alongside men - it is also a feature of the many jobs where employers hire only women as a means of lowering the wages bill. And as far as that is concerned, the Equal Pay Act, Industrial Tribunals and the rest have shown neither the power nor the desire to intervene.

Even where they do intervene, it is usually the women who come off worst. Of all the applications to Industrial Tribunals which have been made, 72 per cent have been turned down. Such figures underline how right the Trico women are to boycott the whole process and insist instead that the best way to get equal pay is through militant action.

And the more militant action there is, the less need there will be for posts as chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission. Better than Ms Lockwood

DEMO CALLED FOR TRICO

Last week Trico management came up with another offer to the women on strike. After putting their heads together for 18 weeks, the Employers Federation and management have concocted yet another formula for equal pay in reverse. It's amazing what this motley crew and their pocket calculators can invent, but to most of us 50p plus the 4½ per cent pay award for women workers only certainly isn't equal pay.

As if that weren't enough, acceptance of this generous offer by the management would also mean agreeing to the abolition of all shop agreements, which protect working conditions in the factory. So at their mass meeting last Friday, the strikers were not prepared to accept the company's offer. Their strike bulletin this week declares: 'The company must forget any ideas it has of avoiding equal pay by reducing the male rate to that of women.'

Red Weekly believes that management will only be persuaded if they are hit where it hurts most - in their pocket. That is why we say that the AUEW Executive should organise national blacking of all wipers, and indeed should have done so as soon as they made the strike official. The lack of such instructions has meant that Trico products are no longer being blacked at the Rover Solihull and Longbridge factories, according to a report given at last Friday's mass meeting.

It was because of the need for national action that we also supported the proposal from the Greater London Association of Trades Councils for a demonstration of trade union support for Trico. Unfortunately, this proposal seems to have disappeared in the mists of time if present progress is anything to judge by.

In the coming weeks, national solidarity action with the Trico strike could be crucial in bringing home to management the 'spirit of the Equal Pay Act'. That is why we urge the fullest support for the demonstration on 2 October called last weekend by the national secretariat of the Working Women's Charter Campaign to show the extent of national support for the Trico strikers. Further information from Sue Landau on 01-278 9526.

The Trico strikers are continuing to win national support. The shop stewards quarterly meeting of Birmingham East District AUEW last Thursday heard a speaker from Trico and then passed a motion calling on the union's Executive Committee to institute a national levy of AUEW members, to implement a national blacking campaign on Trico wipers (especially in British Leyland), and to approach other unions for help in this. An on-the-spot collection raised £60 for the strikers.

Another tremendous gesture of solidarity has been made by some 150 building workers building chalets at Pontins holiday camp in Prestatyn, North Wales. They have voted to levy themselves 50p per week in support of the strike.



With only three votes for, the Trico strikers reject the managements latest offer. The basis for the rejection was explained in a strike bulletin. 'The company must forget any ideas it has of avoiding equal pay by reducing the male rate to that of women.'

ANOTHER TRICO?

ANOTHER STRIKE for equal pay has been going on for six weeks at Jeavons Engineering in Tipton, near West Bromwich. A hundred women members of the Transport & General Workers Union voted last Friday to stay out in support of their demand for equal pay for women who do the same work as men and regrading for those who do semi-skilled work but are classified as unskilled.

Management's latest offer of a £3 rise was rejected by the women, who are determined to win a minimum of £5 plus regrading to achieve equal pay. An effective daytime picket has been organised, and although management are still smuggling in goods at night and trying to persuade office workers to assemble fittings, layoffs have already begun among the male workers at the factory.

The union, however, has failed to make the strike official - apparently Jack Jones and his fellow bureaucrats are more concerned that the claim 'might breach the pay policy' than they are about fighting for women's rights. No strike pay has therefore been forthcoming, and although collections have been organised to help hardship cases, more money is urgently needed.

Please send all donations, resolutions of

SLATER THAN YOU THINK

There's nothing like old friends. Jim Slater made personal loans amounting to £800,000 to his former chairman Tony Buckley because the man was in a spot of trouble. Now Sir James Goldsmith declares that in the case of two former directors who owe money 'there is no use in driving them into the ground'.

Our printer, friendly as he is, cannot afford the charity which operates in the world of the big city moguls. And in contrast to these handouts, we received the disappointing sum of only £26.50 for our Fighting Fund last week. We appeal to all supporters to send whatever they can this week. Our thanks to Southampton supporters, £3; West London supporters, £4.50; D. Sharp, £6; D. Stepto, £3; B. Mills, £4; NGA member, £1; East Birmingham AUEW District Committee member, £5.

Send us the funds to refresh the parts that Jim Slater's money will never reach. The address: Red Weekly Fighting Fund, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

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